

Conditions of Radio Abroad

Interesting Review by Melbourne Trader

MR. A. J. SCOTT, of the Scott Electrical Company of Melbourne, has given the Melbourne "Listener-In" something of his experiences during a six months' trip, from which he returned a week or two ago.

Radio In Central Europe.

MR. SCOTT spent the greater part of his business holiday in Europe visiting most of the principal cities in Germany, Austria, and Holland. He spent a little time in England, and stayed in the United States both going and coming.

Mr. Scott came back full of enthusiasm for the methods, the equipment, and the general practice of radio on the Continent, particularly in Germany. Wireless is very popular throughout Germany. There are something like three and a half million listeners paying 24s. each in license fees, and with this huge revenue the wireless branch of the Post Office is giving a fine service.

Automatic Modulation Control.

THE outstanding factor in their broadcasting is the automatic control of the modulation, rendered possible by a combination of the Reiss microphone and the Telefunken valves. This, of course, does away with the need of a monitor in the control room. The quality of the transmission is beautiful, and there is absolutely no background. The broadcasting stations, however, do not allow the listener to suffer from any gaps of dead silence during broadcasting hours. All the pauses between items are filled in, each station having its own "stop-gap."

Some have a delightful little bell-chime, some use a metronome, and others simply a clock.

Suiting Everybody.

AS to programmes, no one station can please everybody any more there than here, but their system of relay stations, the great network of broadcasting centres that is spread over Central Europe, gives them a tremendous advantage, and any listener with a decent set who cannot get entertainments to suit him is hard to satisfy. You can get an opera practically every night from, say, Berlin, Prague, Budapest, Vienna, or Warsaw; symphony concerts are always available, and good music from a score of hotels, restaurants, and theatres.

Lessons in Foreign Languages.

ONE great feature of the programmes is the lecturette. People of every interest and culture are engaged to give talks, and some of these are excellent. I am quite sure that the dissemination of information and of culture by this means is creating a much better knowledge and understanding between the nations. The increased general knowledge on different languages is helping this. There are always elementary lessons, as well as more advanced readings in English, German, French, Czecho-Slovakian, and so on being given, and some of these are very cleverly and amus-

ingly done. You will hear, for example, a teacher and a student having a lesson—the pupil getting hopelessly mixed, and the master patiently straightening him out.

Three-Valvers for £2 2s.

SO far as reception goes, there are, of course, good and bad sets, but the all-round quality has improved greatly. The crystal set has practically vanished from the radio stores. To popularise the valve set among the poorer classes, manufacturing companies have put receivers on the market at a very low price. One firm turns out a tremendous number of three-valve sets at 40s., including the valves. The Australian listeners wouldn't look at them, but they are quite efficient for local reception and serve to educate the public in the use of valve sets.

The screen grid hasn't yet come into general use. The valve itself is all right, it is a matter of designing the right set. The valve has great possibilities, for the marvel of yesterday is the commonplace of to-day, and another marvel is just a day ahead of us. The all-electric has been gradually evolved by way of the battery eliminator, and soon we shall have little else where the current is available.

Truck Loads of Receivers Auctioned.

IN America radio appears to be as popular as in Central Europe. A number of firms of high standing turn out immense numbers of good class standard receivers, but there is, of course, a great deal of what you might term "also-rans" or "also-wouldn't-runs" would perhaps be better. To go into the area in, say, New York, devoted to the sale of cast-off sets and see truck loads of radio junk being sold by auction is one of the chief amusements of the tourist who is at all interested in radio. America seems to be always shedding old radio sets like leaves in autumn.

Woman Broadcasts Race Results.

IT is rather difficult to compare announcers when one's—what shall I say—linguistic limitations are considered; but my impression was that they were in the main trained men with rather pleasing voices. I am told that they are very largely recruited from the ranks of journalism.

At one or two stations there are women announcers, which reminds me that at a race meeting I heard a speech amplifier of remarkable volume. A woman was announcing the names of the horses and all the details of the race, and her voice carried over a quarter of a mile. I don't know whether she was broadcasting at the same time—probably she was.

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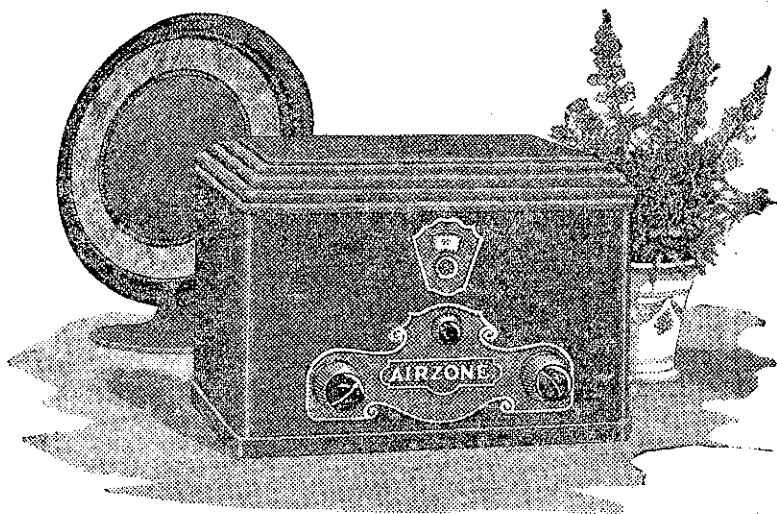
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